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LETTER DATED 6 FEBRUARY 1991 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF JORDAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to transmit to you the text of the speech of His Majesty King Hussein to the nation on Wednesday, 6 February 1991 concerning the war in the Gulf.

I would be grateful if you would be so kind as to have this letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Abdullah SALAH
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

ADDRESS BY HIS MAJESTY KING HUSSEIN TO THE NATION

Amman

Wednesday, 6 February 1991

Brother citizens, Arabs, Arabs everywhere, brother Muslims, you who uphold your faith and refuse to see your nation humiliated; you who are truly sincere within yourselves and in your hearts and minds, and in your objectives, ideas and conduct; you who are concerned for the present as well as the future generations of our nation, I greet every one of you with affection and love.

I choose to address you at this very difficult moment. Arab honour and religious duty move me to address you on the eve of the fourth week of this savage and large-scale war which has been imposed on brotherly Iraq, and which is aimed at Iraq's very existence, its role, its progress and its vitality. It is also aimed at Iraq's right to a life of freedom and dignity, and its determination to fulfil its historic, cultural and human role, which, emanating from Babylon, Baghdad and Basra, has contributed to human civilization, scientific progress and culture.

Iraq, fellow Arabs and Muslims, is now paying the price in pure and noble blood of belonging to its nation. Iraq had always hastened, without hesitation, to pay the price of belonging, and to shed blood in all the battles which the Arabs have fought, or which have been forced upon them in defence of Arab land in Palestine, Syria, Egypt and Jordan. Arab blood has always been dear to Iraq; should not the blood of Iraqi men, women and children be dear to us?! How shamed will be the Arabs who allow Arab blood to be shed in this unjust war?!

The world has known cruel wars, but never one such as this which is being waged against Iraq, and the likes of which it may never know again. The armies of the largest and most powerful nations have gathered and unleashed their tremendous arsenals of the most modern and dangerous weapons on land, at sea, and in the air. These weapons had originally been arrayed by an international military alliance against an opposing alliance led by another super-Power. They are now all arrayed against the Baghdad of Haroun al-Rashid, the Basra of Islamic studies, poetry and date palms, the Kufa of Ali, may God honour Him, Holy Najaf, Kerbala, Diwaniyah, Mosul, Kirkuk, and every Iraqi city and village. Fire rains down upon Iraq from airplanes, battleships, submarines and missiles, destroying mosques, churches, schools, museums, hospitals, a children's milk factory, residential areas, Bedouin tents, electric power stations and water mains. This bombing has continued since the first hours of the war, which is aimed at obliterating all the achievements of Iraq and forcing it back to primitive life through the use of the most up-to-date forms of destructive technology. The first casualties of this war have been right, justice and peace. Its first victims have been the aspirations of humanity since the end of the Second World War, hoping that that war would be the last human tragedy, and that man would no longer be either killer or victim. All the hopes of our nation and the world community were thwarted the day the land of Iraq was turned into the arena of a third world war.

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Brother citizens, brother Arabs, brother Muslims,

The irony of this war is that it is being waged under the cloak of international legitimacy; its crime is being committed in the name of the United Nations, which was established by humanity to preserve peace, security and justice, and to settle all disputes and conflicts through dialogue, negotiations and diplomacy. If this is an example of the role of the United Nations in the new world order, what an ominous future lies before all the peoples and nations! What international legitimacy will serve as a refuge for those whom the mighty seek to subjugate, humiliate, kill and whose God-granted ights they seek to usurp, along with all the principles, values and charters on which the United Nations was founded. We now realize fully the real reasons why we, the Arabs, have been deprived of our right to deal with our own problems, why the hegemony over the United Nations has prevented it from fulfilling its role, and why the doors have been shut against any sincere political attempt to end the Gulf crisis. It is now claimed that every possible effort had been made to solve the crisis during the five months before the war. This is not true. If the effort exerted in preparing for the war had been devoted towards a peaceful settlement, this disaster would not have occurred. Moreover, the current war, with all its destruction, is incompatible with the humanitarian objectives of the United Nations resolutions, which have been adopted to restore peace and security to the Gulf region.

In contrast, there has been no real honest attempt to seek a just solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Palestinian Arab people and the Arab nation still await the implementation of a single United Nations resolution which rejects Israeli occupation and calls for an end to it. Twenty-four years have passed since the occupation of the West Bank, Gaza and the Golan Heights, and nine years have passed since the occupation of southern Lebanon, yet none of our hopes have been fulfilled. Nevertheless, we have not despaired of the United Nations. The major Powers continue to assure us that a peaceful solution is possible. As regards the Gulf crisis, the Arab parties concerned have chosen from the beginning to reject any Arab political dialogue with Iraq, and to block any attempt which might prevent the internationalization of the crisis and its resolution by dealing directly with all its causes and effects. All the good offices of Jordan and others who are concerned for the future of our nation have been thwarted. Why? Because the real purpose of this destructive war, as demonstrated by its scope and the declarations of the parties to it is to destroy Iraq, and rearrange the area in a manner far more dangerous to the present and future of our nation than the Sykes-Picot agreement. This arrangement would put the nation, its aspirations and its resources under direct foreign hegemony and would sever all links between its parts, thus further weakening, fragmenting and debasing it.

The talk about a new world order, whose features are the destruction of Iraq and its potential, and the persistence of this talk as the war continues, lead us to wonder about the essence of this order and to fill us with misgivings regarding its nature.

The new world order to which we aspire holds that all people are equal in their right to freedom, progress and prosperity. It deals with their causes by applying the same humanitarian standards and principles, regardless of any

extraneous considerations or factors. The new world order which is needed would not mete out injustice to any one nation, nor would it discriminate between peoples or nations, but rather it would draw them together within the framework of mutual respect and fruitful co-operation for the benefit of our planet and all the people on it. It would be an order which believes in public freedoms and protects private freedoms, respects human rights and strengthens the foundations of democracy. It would not deny the Arab peoples their right to all this.

The nature of the military alliance against Iraq betrays its short- and long-term objectives. For when Israel supports this alliance, when two countries, one Arab, the other Islamic, both of which have normal political relations with Israel, whose leaders compete for prominence in this alliance and reiterate their desire and enthusiasm for the destruction of Iraq, it becomes easy to see that this is a war against all Arabs and Muslims, and not only against Iraq. When Arab and Islamic lands are offered as bases for the allied armies from which to launch attacks to destroy Arab Muslim Iraq, when Arab money is financing this war with such generosity as we and our Palestinian brothers have never known by reason of our national responsibilities and geographical position, when all this is happening I say that any Arab or Muslim can see the magnitude of this crime which is being committed against his religion and his nation.

Brother citizens,

From the very beginning we have shouldered our responsibilities to the Arab nation and Islam, as well as towards international peace and security. We have made every effort to fulfil these responsibilities. We are not hurt that our rewards have been successive punishments against our country and people. It has become clear to the whole world that these punishments are the price we must pay for having tried to avert the disaster which was planned and plotted in the dark. As a new form of punishment, there are now attempts to deprive us even of our oil needs, for no other reason than our stand of principle. It is because we are not a party to the conflict, nor part of the alliance, unwilling to dance to the tune others play, with no will of our own, no rights and no ability to express our own free opinion. We would not forsake this right because it is equal in importance to our human right to breathe the air, which is not yet rationed. Nevertheless, Jordan's leadership and people will remain firm in their position and belief that the opportunities for peace still exist. To return to these opportunities would be less costly and a truer expression of the commitment to principles and values than the continuation of this devastating war.

The voices of millions can be heard in every country, including those of the alliance. They all call for peace and an end to the killing of children, the destruction of homes, and the withholding of medicine from the sick. I know just as you do that against these voices stand political and military leaders, alas with Arabs in their forefront, calling for the continuation of this war. Which voices will prevail in the end? The voices of peace, love, reason and right, or the voices of war, hatred, insanity and wrong?

We and other brothers have made a resounding appeal to halt military action and open the way for diplomatic political action to deal with the problem, but no

one has responded so far. How often before the war broke out did we not warn against its impact, the deep wounds which it would open, its ever-widening repercussions and its human, economic and ecological tragedies. We warned that war is a measure of the last resort, to be launched only after all efforts to avert it have been exhausted. Our calls and warnings were in vain.

Justice will be victorious, God willing, brothers, and our nation will prevail because through those victories humanity will prevail against its enemies. Life will prevail over death. Love among nations will prevail over the desire to sow and spread hatred. All those who had hoped that our nation would be divided, as are its leaders, and that it is a dead nation, will be proved wrong. Our nation will remain, God willing, a strong, proud and vibrant nation. "These, your people, are one people and I am your Lord, so worship Me" (Surat al-Anbiya', verse 92). Let us have fear of God and remember that if this situation continues it will only benefit those who covet our lands and resources, and first and foremost Israel. There are already signs that the spoils are being divided. We hear and read every day of plans to control our resources, limit our freedom of decision, stifle our aspirations and usurp our rights. There is talk of proposed military alliances and bases and foreign troops that will remain on Arab soil, of restrictions on our development and of a solution to the Palestinian problem which has been drawn up or which will be drawn up by others according to what they see, and according to the will of the powerful over the weak. We cannot imagine that such a solution will satisfy the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people on its national soil.

This is a call from a Hashemite Arab to all honourable Arab and Muslim leaders. Let us join our efforts to stop this catastrophe and save the people of Iraq from the fate that is intended for them. Let us save our nation from the designs on it. Let us put an end to this war.

The starting-point for all this is immediate and serious efforts to have the alliance cease hostilities, in preparation for a responsible dialogue between the parties in conflict: an Iraqi-American dialogue and an Arab-Arab dialogue, both of which should appeal to reason, a balance of interests and international legitimacy, the legitimacy of peace and security, justice and equality.

By destroying Iraq, this war has exceeded the limits set by the United Nations in its resolutions. This is confirmed by the declarations of the alliance leaders. So where does the United Nations stand? The alternative to a cease-fire is the destruction of Arabs and Muslims, their humiliation, their degradation, their exploitation, the trampling on their honour, pride and legitimate hopes, the sowing of hatred and strife between nations. We in Jordan will remain the Arabs of all Arabs, the noblest of the noble, the men of all men. We shall always remain united, army and people, fully prepared to defend our country. If the battle is forced upon us we shall be equal to it and gain one of God's two favours (victory or martyrdom). Our hearts are filled with faith and trust - we praise God.

From Amman of the Arabs I convey to our people in Palestine our great pride in them, in their steadfastness, their resilience in their suffering. A whole nation is under house arrest, without work, without medicine, without a livelihood. But

it is a people which believes in God and stands firm by the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

As for our people in Iraq, what words can describe their great courage and pride, their tenacity and their unique ability to face 28 allied countries, 28 armies headed by the largest, most powerful and best-armed army of the world! To them we convey our love and our pride as they defend us all and raise the banner that says God is great, the banner of Arabs and Islam. We salute Iraq, its heroic army, its steadfast, courageous people, its glorious women, its brave children, and its aged who confront with the resolve of the faithful the bombers, the missiles and the tons of explosives.

We send special greetings of esteem and respect to His Holiness Pope John Paul II for his prayers and continuous calls for peace in the Middle East, and to the peoples and international figures everywhere who have come out against the war and who call for peace. We send greetings of pride to all our Arab and Muslim brothers and all those on the five continents who from the first moments of the war took a stand for life and peace against death, destruction and aggression.

I pay a special debt of thanks to all those who search for the truth and disseminate it because they respect and care for it, to all the newsmen, politicians and academics who live among us and do their duty with honesty and professionalism.

"Most of their conferrings together are devoid of good, except such as enjoin charity, or the promotion of public welfare or of public peace; and on him who strives after these, seeking the gratification of God, shall we soon bestow a great reward" (Surat al-Nisa', verse 114).

Peace and the mercy and blessings of God be upon you.